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Study shows that the GRADS program helps teen parents succeed in school

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Institute for Public Policy’s recent [study](#) of the Graduation, Reality and Dual-role Skills (GRADS) program showed nearly 50 percent of participants graduated high school by age 22 compared to approximately 36 percent of parenting and pregnant teens not in GRADS.

“The study gives us independent validation that the GRADS program works,” said Superintendent of Public Instruction Randy Dorn. “We’re able to keep students in school and provide them with the skills they need to succeed in life. I strongly urge every district that doesn’t have one to start a GRADS program.”

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction oversees GRADS with support from the Washington State Department of Health. GRADS is an evidence-based program that helps pregnant and parenting teens graduate high school, build their parenting skills, and find a job or continue their education after they graduate. Students in the program receive free child care during class. Currently, 23 programs in 20 school districts in the state have GRADS.

“We know that high school graduation positively impacts long-term financial success and good health. GRADS helps our pregnant and parenting teens develop a strong foundation for both themselves and their children,” said Secretary of Health John Wiesman.

The study also found that by age 24, approximately 55 percent of GRADS students enrolled in a postsecondary course, compared to 49 percent of pregnant and parenting students not in GRADS.

GRADS is also a good investment. The study showed that the benefits of the program in increased employment, tax revenue, savings on health care, and more, outweighed the costs of the program \$3 to \$1.

To find out more about the GRADS program, visit the [OSPI webpage](#).

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